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CEREBUS

mothers & daughters

17

167
FEB

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

The Tour has been over now for a little over a month and I am just starting to get over Tour mode, having spent a year knowing that I was three days behind on almost everything and on my way to the airport.

I think the biggest adjustment I've had to make is being completely out-of-touch with what's going on in the business. I remember Larry Marder telling me about coming back from his Africa/England vacation and walking smack into the Death of Superman thing; feeling completely lost and out of tune with everything current. The whole industry is on fast forward. The difference in my case is that I won't be walking back into it for a few months anyway and even at that I'll be starting from square one, not taking everything I learned on the previous stop and digging for confirmation or refutation of Last Week's Truth. It's one of the biggest differences between the publisher/creator end of comics and the retailer/distributor end. For the latter, particularly at the warehouse level, and *particularly* on 'new comics day' all information is current and there is a New Truth every week (Punisher books are dying. Venom is 'hot'). For the former everything is largely guess-work about what the New Truth will be on the shipping week three to six months away. When I started the Tour, Alpha Flight 106 was hot, Image was a rumour, Ghost Rider, Punisher and Wolverine were money-in-the-bank cross-over characters, gimmick covers sold like crazy, hologram covers were brand new. A year later and Image is hot and all the rest of that stuff is yesterday's potatoes.

The experience of planning a bagged, gold logo, hologram card insert Cerebus number zero in November (see Campaign '93 elsewhere in this issue) when it would have sold very well and then getting word of the backlash against poly-bagging at the same time I was getting a clearer idea of the costs involved has been a sobering one to say the least. Well, you can read all about it in the back of the book, along with information about the parts of Campaign '93 that I still have confidence in.

★★★★★★★★★★

On the creator side of things, everything is almost too good. Fun. That's the new word that everyone seems to be rediscovering. Frank Miller phoned at the end of December; first time I've talked to him in four years or so. Coincidentally enough it was about fifteen minutes after I had finished reading the collected *Sin City* (thanks to Di for sending me a comp copy and Mike Richardson for saying it was okay to do so). After years in the Hollywood cesspool, Frank is back in a big way, having a blast, doing his own lettering, enjoying the creative freedom only comic books have to offer. He just sat down and did what he wanted to do and a forty-eight page story mushroomed into a two hundred page graphic novel. Now he can't wait to do more. Scott McCloud sent me an advance copy of *Understanding Comics* which is absolutely brilliant, insightful, thought-provoking and . . . HEY! FUN! Alan Moore, Steve Bissette and Rick Vietch have been having a blast doing *1963*. Fun, fun, fun. Todd's still having a great time with *Spawn;* I finally have all of the dialogue written for issue #10 (it needs a little trimming here and there). I even did a thumb-nail sketch of a two-page spread, faxed it to Todd as a teaser and faxed it to Neil Gaiman to see if he had room for it in issue #9; which he did. It'll be part of a dream sequence. Todd phoned today to tell me that he's sending up a copy of Neil's script for me to look at; so I'm eagerly watching the mailbox for that one. I talked to Neil and he said he had a lot of (you guessed it) fun doing it. He found the same thing I did; working on *Spawn* helped to put more of a sense of enjoyment back into his regular work on *Sandman*. Same thing with *Cerebus*. I got to pump Todd for future directions on *Spawn;* partly because I wanted to incorporate a few things into issue 10, but partly for the sheer satisfaction of knowing things about *Spawn* that other people don't. Nyah. Nyah.

Of course everyone is also getting a hoot out of how much this bugs Gary Grinch; excuse me, Gary *Groth*. I remember trying to explain to him in Seattle the IDEA of creators having fun with what they do and of course he was horrified, disgusted, appalled, sickened. An Artiste doesn't have fun with his work. An Artiste is Serious About His Work At All Times.

Hey, Gary. Bite me.

★★★★★★★★★★

I'd like to thank everyone who showed up at the End of the Tour Party. It was the busiest night at *Peter's Place* since the mid-eighties. Everyone had a really good time (well, I don't know if *everyone* did, but *I* did). I'd especially like to thank everyone who drove, flew or took the train up just to be there for a few hours Saturday night. Wish we could do it every weekend. Really.

★★★★★★★★★★

I'm having such a good time working on the book EXCLUSIVELY this month (and the Leafs have won four games in a row, let's not forget that) that I'm afraid I've fallen disastrously behind on my correspondence and what-not. Don't despair; you're under that mound of paper on my coffee-table somewhere. I'll find you. Really I will. Ummm.

Later.

CEREBUS

NO. 167 FEBRUARY 1993

DAVE SIM
President

GERHARD
Vice-President

LINDA BERZINS
Typesetting

MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS
a novel

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BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 151 to Cerebus 162)
Flight

•

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 163 to Cerebus 174)
Women

•

BOOK THREE
(Cerebus 175 to Cerebus 188)

•

BOOK FOUR
(Cerebus 189 to Cerebus 200)

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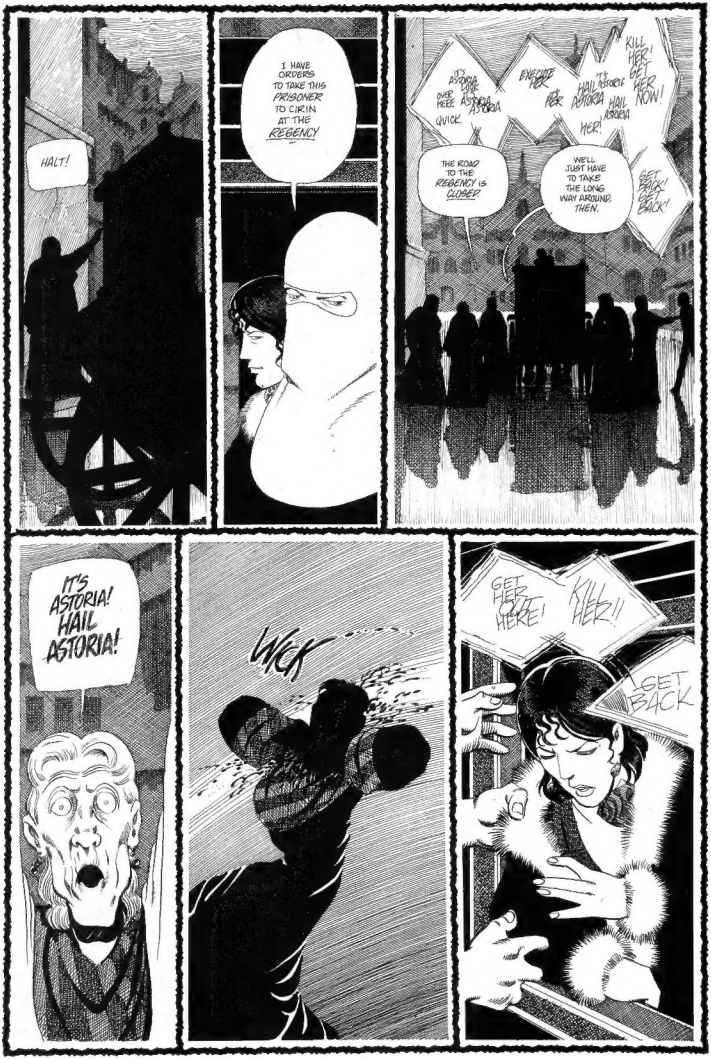
I know things that have been forgot.

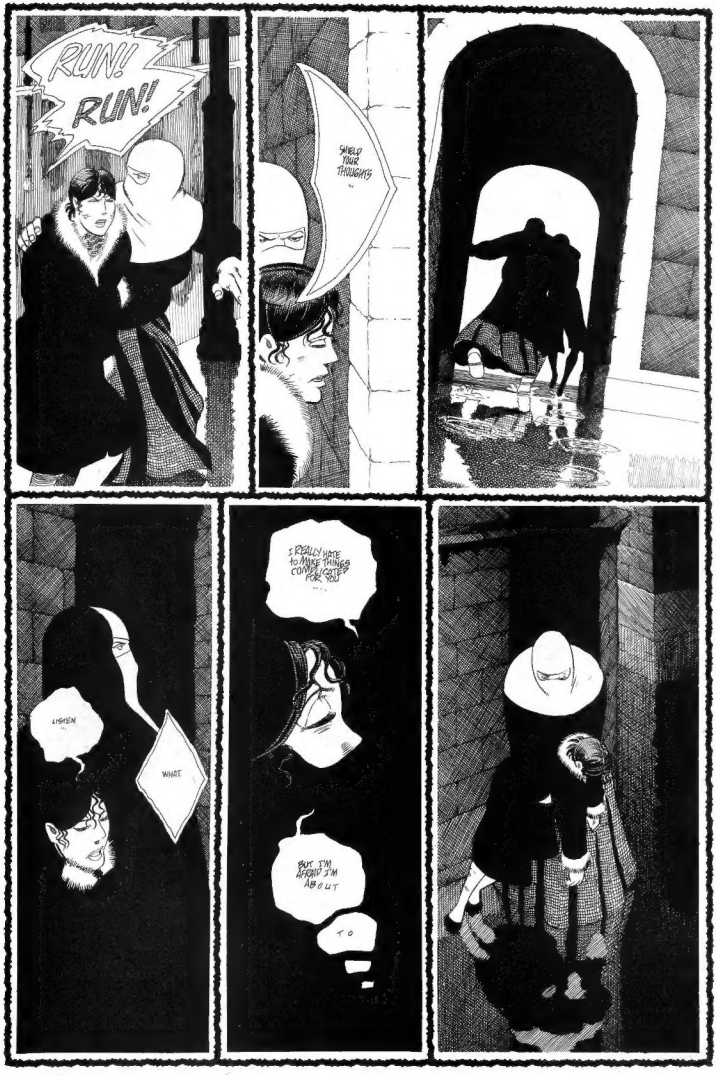
I know things
that will never be
forgot.


HALT!
I HAVE ORDERS TO TAKE THIS PRISONER TO CIRIN AT THE REGENCY
IT'S ASTORIA! HAIL ASTORIA!
OVER HERE QUICK.
EVERYONE HERE
HAIL ASTORIA
HAIL ASTORIA HER!
KILL HER! GET HER NOW!
THE ROAD TO THE REGENCY IS CLOSER
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TAKE THE LONG WAY AROUND, THEN.
GET BACK GET BACK!
IT'S ASTORIA! HAIL ASTORIA!
WICK
GET HER OUT OF HERE!
KILL HER!!
GET BACK

DRIVER!
GO!
GO!
CIRIN'S ORDERS CIRIN'S RIVEDI
REINFORCEMENTS ON EASTERN
CRIMES OF
CAPTURE ASTORIA STOP
ALL CIVILIAN PERSONNEL IN THE AREA
SHE'S CIRIN'S SHOOT SUCCUBUS
LET THEM THROUGH, LET THEM
KILL THEM BOTH ASTORIA TOO TRAITORS
YOU'RE ALL MAD!!
KEVILLIAS THEY'RE ALL REINFORCEMENTS ALL MILITARY
EXECUTE THEM
STOP THEM WE HAVE TO STOP THEM!
IN THE NAME OF THE
GET BACK!! ALL OF YOU!!
MADNESS! MADNESS!
EVERYONE JUST GET BACK!!
TRAITORS EXECUTE THE TRAITORS
LOOK OUT! GET OUT OF
LOOK OUT! THEY'RE GOING TO
SKAAAAAAGH
ULK
UH!
THUMP
DOWN!
DOWN!
STAY
STAY DOWN!

WHUR AM I GOIN' AN' M?
WHUR AM I GOIN'?!
THE REGENT!
AVOID PURSUIT!
SIDE STREETS
THUNK
NO BOULEVARDS
THUNK
AYE, MUTH!
TUNG
CLK

CRAK
GET UP! GET UP!
MY ARM...


RUN!
RUN!
SHIELD YOUR THOUGHTS
LISTEN
WHAT
I REALLY HATE TO MAKE THINGS COMPLICATED FOR YOU
BUT I'M AFRAID I'M ABOUT
TO

It has all changed now.
The Upper City will be invaded ...by the Lower.
Not the other way around
We will need no weapons now.
Your time is done, my sister ...
And mine?
Mine has just begun...
You played a... key role. You bring honour to our family...
WHOA! AH SAY WHOA THAR SON!

I'M THE LAST RULER OF A DYIN' RACE!
AH DON'T HAVE ANY FAMILY!
Nonsense, my sister.
Think back.
Remember.
We have many names
in many realities
We are
"The Clueless"
When the Multiverse was born
We were mere infants.

Little $WOONY
Little $NUFFY
Little $LEAZY
Little $ILKY
Little $PACEY
Little
WHOA AH SAY WHOA AGIN, SON...
AH DON'T BELIEVE IN ANYBODY'S HALLUCINATIONS
(DELUSIONS THAT IS)...
BUT YOU MUST'VE NOTICED THAT WE-ALL ARE THE ONLY ONES HERE! WE'RE A DUET SON...
TWO PART HARMONY? Y'SEE WHUT AHM SAYIN'? WHERE AH SAY WHERE'S THE BOYS IN THE BAND? WHERE'S THE REST OF THE SWOON COUNTRY FAMILY SINGERS?
(CHORUS THAT IS)

In this reality, we are ...
... comedy relief.
The plot is...
... complicated.
a large supporting cast would be...
unwieldy.
YO' DIDDLIN' YO SELF UNDER THERE AGIN ...
AREN'T YOU, SON
It...
... comforts me.

The Matriarchists are at great pains to eliminate the true histories of female dominated societies. Most particularly they disavow any awareness of the brief period in the history of Iest's Upper City when the singular philosophies of the T'capmin writer Kevil took hold. To me, this was the only period of enlightenment in the sordid history of Cirinism when a natural division of responsibility and interests was put in place; Mothers in charge of all issues governing the family and child care and Daughters in charge of all issues not concerned with family and child care. The evolution from one group to the other was natural and well-suited to the needs of society as a whole. Upon giving birth, a woman's tasks changed from those extroverted concerns to a mother's more naturally introverted concerns. The fact that the matriarchy, as constituted in Upper Felda, has been forced to become totalitarian and dictatorial is the surest sign that it is completely out of synch with the natural rhythms of human existence.

Astoria
Kevillist Origins

There have been various aberrant forms of the pure Matriarchy in our long history; experiments where the Daughter rules the Mother. Without exception, these experiments have been disastrous. To limit a Mother's influence to family and child care alone is to ignore the fact that family and child care are irrevocably connected to all aspects of society. A foreign policy which is not founded on the family is misguided adventurism. An economic policy which is not founded on the family is unenlightened avarice. And so on.

Cirin
The New Matriarchy

See, I was trying to find *her* and *she* was trying *not* to let me find her and then got scared. I had this really strong feeling that something *really really bad* was going to happen. I kept thinking "Cerebus is going to kill me — why is Cerebus going to kill me?"

But . . .

And then the mountain fell over and suddenly she was right there! Right there in front of me!

The fake Regency Elf.

No, dopey pants. The *real* one. Not the *fake*!

But .

See, she was the legend, the one everyone had known about for years and years and *years*. But she doesn't look like me a bit. She has dark wavy hair and big slanted eyes and tall pointy ears and she looks like a porcelain doll!

But . . .

See, *she* couldn't exist outside of the Ambassador Suite. That's how I knew she was the real one. I could go outside and play wickets or visit the kitchen or go to the lobby but when the Ambassador Suite got smunched she just went away poof!

Uh . . . so where did you come from?

I came from *you*, silly-billy. I already *told* you that!

No you didn't.

Yes I did. Oh, no. Wait. That's right. I didn't.

Well, I did! I came from you

See, you were *in* the Ambassador Suite the first time you went to the Suenteus Po Place and you were zooming and zipping and swooping and veering and zigging and zagging and swooshing and swishing and

Cerebus gets the idea.

So with all that zooming and zipping and [illegible] us and that stuff and the REAL Regency Elf being right there, see, that made me. See?

Huh.

HEY! I JUST REALIZED!

Realized what?

I'm your DAUGHTER!

WHAT!?

I'm your DAUGHTER!

THAT'S THE CRAZIEST THING CEREBUS EVER HEARD!

It's NOT crazy I'm your DAUGHTER! Your DREAM DAUGHTER! I look like the girl you lived next door to when you were growing up and I look like Jaka and I look like Katrina and I look like Doris and

YOU ARE NOT CEREBUS' DAUGHTER!

Yes I am! Yes I am!

YOU ARE NOT!

Am too! Am too! And I can prove it!

Yeah? How?

Make love to me!

ELF! WHAT A THING TO SAY!

See? See?

You wanted to make love to the girl next door!

Yes, but . . .

And you wanted to make love to Katrina!

Yes, but . . .

And you DID make love to Jaka!

Yes, but . . .

C'mon what are you waiting for?

Look, I'll take off my dress

ELF! DON'T YOU DARE! STOP IT! STOP THAT NOW! STOP THIS FOOLISH-NESS RIGHT NOW YOUNG LADY OR CEREBUS WILL . . . WILL . .

HA!

I'm yo-ur daugh-ter!

I'm yo-ur daugh-ter!

This is a dream. Of course. This is too weird. It's a dream.

Uh uh

Sure. It's a dream and Cerebus is going to wake up and Cerebus will go and get himself a nice drink.

Uh uh. It's LIKE a dream, but it's different. You're really here

No no. Cerebus is just dreaming and when Cerebus wakes up, Cerebus will get himself a nice drink and . . .

What do you want to drink, Daddy?

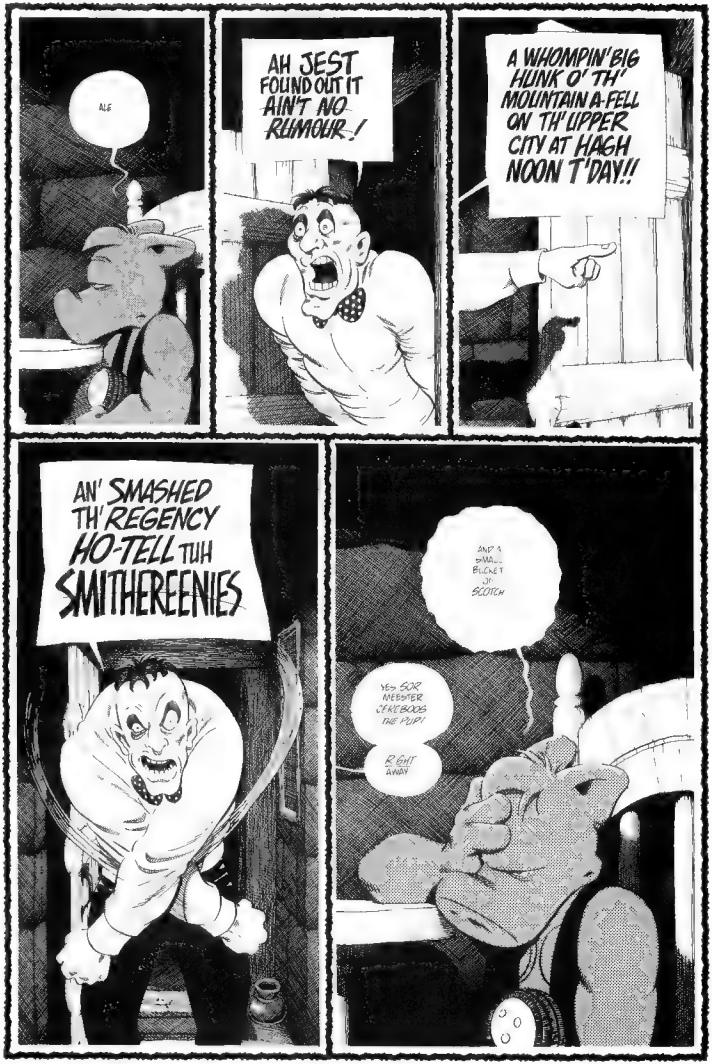
An ale . . . a nice tall . . . DON'T *DO* THAT!

Don't do what?

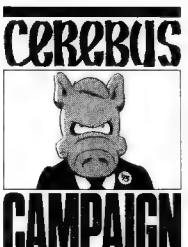
DON'T CALL CEREBUS . . .

DADDY
WHERE'S LUNCH
WHERE'S LUNCH

HEES BEEN GUN FOOR HOURSE
WHY DUNT YU GUH END SEE IF HEES OLE RIGHT?
MEE? WHY ME? TER TH' DANG MANAGER!!
I KNUH · BUT I EM SCOOPOSE TO WATCH THE BAR..
EF THE OWNAIR COOMS EEN, EH? FINDS ME GUN SKKKKKK HE KEEL ME DED
AH AIN'T FINISHED MUH BEER, YET!
FOORST Y'U SAY "I KENT GUH · I NEET A BEER"
THAIN YU SAY, "I KENT GUH, I NEET ANUTHAIR BEER"
WHY DUNT YUH SENT YU BRUTHAIR UP? WHAIR EES HEE?
HE WENT TUH FIND OUT WHUT THET BIG KERBANG WUZ ALL ABOUT · NOW LEAVE ME ALONE TUH FINISH MUH DANG BEER IN PEACE, YUH SCRAWNY, NO ACCOUNT "
SH! HEER HE EES!
HALLO! WE NAIR JOOST TA.KEENK ABOUT Y'UH..
WOOT Y'U LIKE SUMTHEENG TUH DREENK, MUST HUVVY?


ALE
AH JEST FOUND OUT IT AIN'T NO RUMOUR!
A WHOMPIN' BIG HUNK O' TH' MOUNTAIN A-FELL ON TH' UPPER CITY AT HAGH NOON T'DAY!!
AN' SMASHED TH' REGENCY HO-TELL TUH SMITHEREENIES
AND A SMALL BUCKET O' SCOTCH
YES SOR MEBBER SKATEBOOS THE PUP!
RIGHT AWAY

Aardvark Comment will return next issue. Please do not adjust your comic book.



Dear Retailer:
I drew this issue, one page a day, every day, for the first three weeks of this year. It was luxurious. For the first time in over a year, I climbed back into my ivory tower and immersed myself in pure creativity. No airport departure lounges. No hotel rooms. No warehouses. No media interviews. No store appearances. A large part of me would be very happy to do that for the next eleven years and one month that remain of the CEREBUS project.

But our work isn't finished.

TOUR '92 was a great beginning; a solid foundation for the task that lies ahead in defining and developing Larry Marder's Direct Link; the Direct Link between creators and retailers; the vital connection that will allow creators and retailers (if they choose) to stop functioning as mere puppets and chess-pieces in the direct market and to become, instead, full and equal partners.

On the next few pages, I have outlined what I think is a reasonable, low-budget approach to promoting a marginal black & white book like CEREBUS, tailored to the needs and limited resources of comic book stores. It requires belief in yourself and your abilities as a retailer, as well as a conviction that CEREBUS can sell more copies in your store than it does now; whether that number, currently, is two, or five, or fifty or one hundred.

CAMPAIGN '93 puts control in your hands. I'm not going to send you a dozen t-shirts. I'm going to send you a t-shirt design. I'm not going to send you a boxful of buttons. I'm going to send you button designs. You can print a dozen of them or you can print five thousand. You can give them away or you can sell them for profit. If you put those profits back into CAMPAIGN '93; the program outlined on the next few pages and the future program as it evolves through the year; then I think the Direct Link has every chance of success.

Other creators will be watching.

All of them are torn between my description of the retail community as largely idealistic, autonomous individuals who feel hamstrung and impotent in the face of Big Picture Distribution and Multi-National Corporate Comic Book Companies. I have found that the majority of retailers, when given the opportunity to take the reins in their OWN hands and make things happen in their OWN store, will rise to the occasion and (as I saw so often on TOUR '92) exceed even the wildest expectations for success.

Creators are torn between that perception and the more widely-held vision of your community (with few exceptions); as money-grubbing, short-sighted panderers to the lowest common denominator, disinterested in quality; fan-boy pimps for four-colour crap.

This is not intended as an end-run around the distributors. It is a CAMPAIGN which is open to anyone who wants to participate. If it succeeds, it means more profit for the distributors on the monthly book and the reprint volumes.

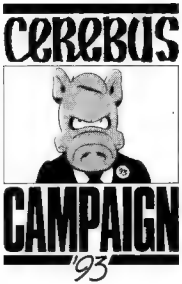
I feel that CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO and SPAWN #10 offer a 'window of opportunity' to prove that when creators cooperate with retailers and retailers cooperate with creators, each doing their share and remaining aware that we are human beings dealing with human beings and each has limitations in terms of time and money and energy; that great things can be accomplished for both parties.

The success or failure of CAMPAIGN '93 rests on your collective shoulders. Success, I hope, would bring about a new and multi-faceted era of cooperation between creators and retailers. Failure would reinforce the view that individuals can't and shouldn't make a difference; that art and commerce are, and *must* be, mutually exclusive; that control of the direct market should be left in the hands of large publishing companies and large distribution concerns and that we all should and *must* accept the status quo.

I sincerely hope that that is not the case.

Dave Sim

'The Direct Link between creators and retailers.'



'CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO got off on the wrong foot.'

CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO got off on the wrong foot. By now you will have been solicited for and probably ordered the "poly-bagged, gold logo edition with a hologram card insert". I'm afraid I succumbed to the pressure to launch CAMPAIGN '93 immediately (like, four days after I got back from Houston). I projected a net loss on the project of between eight and ten thousand dollars (it was, after all, a promotion tool; not a cash cow), but when I had the final quotes in hand, the projected loss had risen to between thirty and forty thousand dollars.

Back, as they say, to the drawing board.

It seemed more practical to release CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO in two versions; a white logo and a gold logo. It is still 96 pages; reprinting "Exodus" (*Cerebus* 51), "Square One" (*Cerebus* 112/113) and "Like-a-looks" (*Cerebus* 137–138). It will include introductions out-lining where the stories fit into the *Cerebus* continuity (between *High Society* and *Church & State volume one*, between *Church & State volume two* and *Jaka's Story* and between *Jaka's Story* and *Melmoth* respectively) and should be exactly the kind of "introduction to CEREBUS" project that was requested so often by retailers on TOUR '92.

As is usually the case with these kinds of projects, one copy of the gold logo edition will be sent to retailers who order fifty copies of the white logo edition; five copies if they order two hundred of the white logo edition.

For the average store, the gold logo is a standard "incentive" along the lines of Vertigo's platinum *Death* #1. For the CAMPAIGN '93 stores, I would hope that the gold logo edition (either by auction or raffle or some such) could provide some cash on hand for investment in the CAMPAIGN; functioning as a CAMPAIGN fundraiser. Since the gold logo edition will probably be purchased by a Cerebus fan, the Direct Link becomes a three party "axis"; creator-retailer-patron. Obviously, I (and I hope you) don't want to over-do this end of it, but I do have tentative plans for limited prints and such later in the year which will fit in with this creator-retailer-patron axis, with the idea that all proceeds are, again, channelled back into CAMPAIGN '93.

Since CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO will be in very high demand from fans who have all the reprint volumes and should be a steady seller as a supplement to the reprint volumes, I think I'm safe in saying that this is a good spot to invest your primary amounts of time and energy and money.

Obviously the biggest selling feature or 'hook' to use for traditional comic book fans is 'three for the price of one' since the 96 page comic will be the same price as a regular issue. Now that Image has helped to break the 'Two Dollar Barrier' I don't think there will be as much resistance as usual, and it seems a much better use for a few thousand dollars of what we have allotted for subsidizing the CAMPAIGN.

Solicitation would be for June, to allow us all time to get things off on the RIGHT foot with the rest of the CAMPAIGN in the next few months and to capitalize on whatever interest is generated by SPAWN #10 in the late spring.

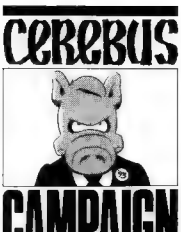
CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO B&W 96 pages
$2.25 USA $2.75 CAN £1.25 UK

white logo
CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO
GOSH, CEREBUS, WHERE YOU LIKE HAVE COOL BACK IN THE OLDEN DAYS?
AWW, GOSH! YOU DON'T HAVE TO BUY A COPY AND THEN TAKE ONE YOURSELF, BUTT-HEAD
CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO
GOSH, CEREBUS, WILL THIS COMIC BE WORTH A LOT OF MONEY SOME DAY?
NOT WHILE I BEING TWO ORDERS, SLEEPY, CAPITALISTIC MEENIE!
gold logo

CEREBUS

CAMPAIGN '93

"Three for the price of one"... the 96 page comic will be the same price as a regular issue.'



'The front cover addresses Cerebus' strengths in the comic book field'

The next most important element after CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO and SPAWN #10 in CAMPAIGN '93 will be two pamphlets promoting CEREBUS to the two most likely target audiences for the book; traditional comic book fans and women.

First the traditional comic book fans.

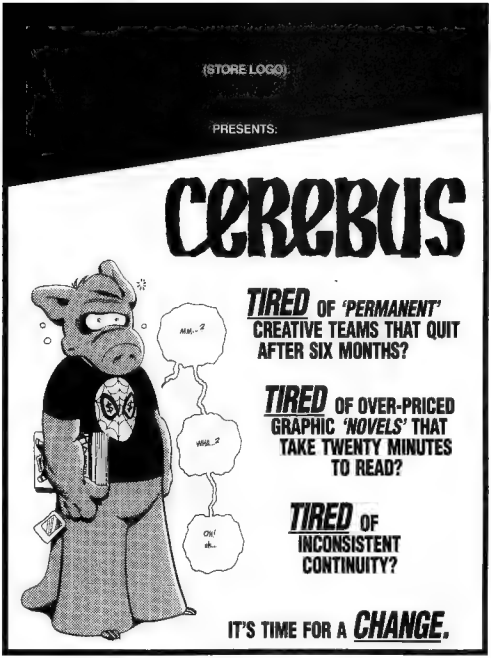
As Marvel is dying on the vine, and as Image continues to attract rabid fan attention (which is not being serviced by anyone except Todd), traditional comic fans are more open than at any time in the history of the direct market to experimentation and sampling of other kinds of work. Maybe not a majority of them, but I believe a significant number are now more curious than ever before about what is available.

The front cover addresses CEREBUS' strengths in the comic book field; no fill-in issues, genuine continuity over the course of three thousand plus pages and value for the money. These are not only CEREBUS' strengths (I feel), but also the mainstream's greatest weaknesses; musical chairs creative teams, non-continuity, often stretched out over five or six titles with no good reason except greed, and inflated prices on very, very slim graphic "novels" (*Tell Me, Dark* at 35.95 in Canada? It took me all of twenty minutes to read. Give me a break).

The pamphlet idea I got from Marty Hyder of *Black Dragon* in Tennessee. It is essentially an 11 X 17 sheet, printed on both sides and folded once to form an 8-1/2 X 11 four page pamphlet. Again, these would be supplied as glossy originals with space for the store logo (address, etc. etc.) at the top. The inside front would be a condensed version of Don Thompson's very flattering Cerebus review from the December 2 issue of the CBG (I hope that's all right, Don?). The inside back page would reproduce the covers of the CEREBUS reprint volumes, short descriptions and their suggested retail price under CEREBUS: THE FIRST HALF *(Cerebus, High Society, Church & State I* and *II, Jaka's Story* and *Melmoth).*

The back page would feature a personal pitch from the store owner (or manager) for the CEREBUS series and reprint volumes. We'll typeset a suggested 'note' which you are, of course, free to modify or change completely. Some stores have already expressed willingness to include a money-back guarantee on this page, or a coupon for a free copy of the current issue or a free t-shirt with any new Cerebus subscription for one year. A lot of possibilities here. I would also strongly suggest that the owner (or manager) sign the note on the back personally. I know it's a drag signing your name a bunch of times (boy, do I know it), but I really think that personal touch will mean as much if not more than the rest of the pamphlet in showing that you genuinely stand behind the quality of the CEREBUS reprint volumes and the monthly series.

Apart from just having them out on the counter, the pamphlets (I think) would work well put in every store bag, in every subscription file, etc. etc. The big advantage is that *you* control the quantity of pamphlets since they can be easily quick-printed or photo-copied as you need them. The critical element in any kind of promotion CAMPAIGN is a steady supply of CAMPAIGN materials. Again, you can print up a hundred, three hundred at a time or ten thousand. The extent of your involvement is entirely up to you. If you don't like this pamphlet design or you'd prefer to do one of your own, you're free to use all or part of it or use any panels from the book in your own promotion. It is important that you feel confident in the promotion that you do. *I* feel pretty confident that this pamphlet can do the trick, but *your* confidence is what really matters and will make the difference.


(STORE LOGO)
PRESENTS:
CEREBUS
TIRED OF 'PERMANENT' CREATIVE TEAMS THAT QUIT AFTER SIX MONTHS?
TIRED OF OVER-PRICED GRAPHIC 'NOVELS' THAT TAKE TWENTY MINUTES TO READ?
TIRED OF INCONSISTENT CONTINUITY?
IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE.

CEREBUS CAMPAIGN '93

'The pamphlet idea I got from Marty Hyder of *Black Dragon* in Tennessee'

'Cerebus has one of the larger female readerships in the world of direct market comic books'

The second pamphlet targets a group that everyone seems to do a great deal of talking about but for whom nothing seems to be done: Women.

Cerebus has one of the larger female readerships in the world of direct market comic books and I get a great deal of fan mail from women who only read *Cerebus* and *Sandman* (or *Cerebus* and *Love and Rockets,* etc.). There is usually a healthy representation of couples at any Cerebus signing; most particularly husbands or boy-friends who are long-time fans and who read a number of comics titles and their wives or girl-friends who, in an effort to share their interest and out of natural curiosity, have managed to find one or two titles that they enjoy and are interested in following.

And, obviously, a four year story-line entitled *Mothers & Daughters* should have some appeal for female readers, as well as the *Jaka's Story* reprint volume.

I have intentionally directed the pamphlet at women, generally, as opposed to the smaller 'fan-girl' audience or an indirect approach to mothers, wives and girl-friends through their sons, husbands or boy-friends (i.e. "A comic book even your girl-friend will like"). The greatest potential here, I think is the uncomfortable woman standing in the corner of your store, trying to be inconspicuous and just wishing she could leave (not altogether uncommon, right?).

I don't think you have to go overboard or anything, but going up and handing her the pamphlet (and perhaps a Cerebus button pictured later in this section) and saying something very simple along the lines of "Most of the comics are intended for a male audience, but there are a few that men AND women like. Let me know if you'd like to see any of them." And just leave it at that.

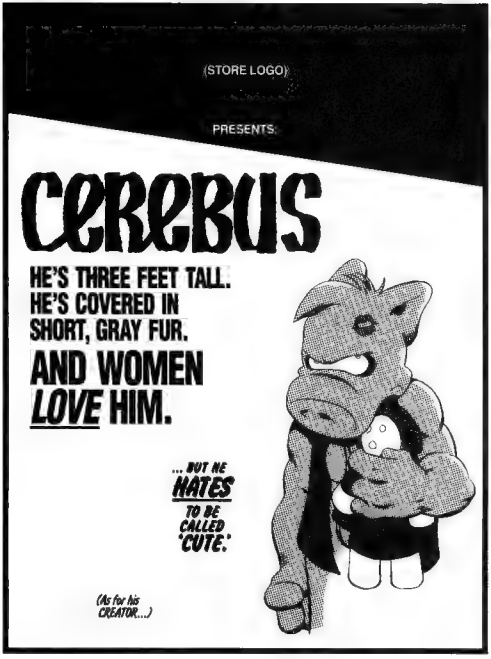
It was Diana Schutz who suggested the approach for the interior of the pamphlet; pull quotes from letters written by women to Aardvark Comment broken down into two categories a) what a great comic book *Cerebus* is b) what a prick Dave Sim is. These would alternate on the inside front under the heading "What Women Have To Say About Cerebus . . . (and Dave Sim)"; what a great comic, what a prick, what a great comic, what a prick, etc. Diana was certain that this would spark more curiosity than review excerpts or panels from *Jaka's Story,* and having gone back through Aardvark Comment to find the best examples of both category, I find myself in complete agreement.

The inside back would, again, be pictures of the reprint volumes, short descriptions, prices, etc.

The back would, again, be a personal pitch from the owner or manager, addressing head-on (I think this is critical) the fact that a comic book store is basically a boys' club since comic books have been traditionally an adolescent male medium full of guys in long underwear beating each other up. This could be followed by a list of critically acclaimed comic series by female creators (Pini's *Elfquest,* Gregory's *Naughty Bits,* Doran's *A Distant Soil,* Duffy's *Nestrobber,* etc.) as well as books that enjoy a larger than average female audience (the usual suspects; *Sandman, Swamp Thing, Hate, Love & Rockets, Beanworld, Hepcats, Yummy Fur*). You could include a coupon or money-back guarantee just as on the first pamphlet; or if you're really feeling adventurous, a straight twenty-per cent or ten per cent discount on their first purchase. If you keep the note general enough, you could even use it as a flier to hand out to women on college campuses, coffee-houses, waitresses, etc.

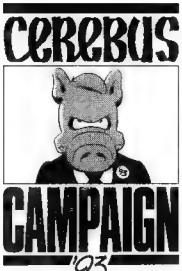
Even if you choose not to do this in association with Cerebus and CAMPAIGN '93, I think the idea is long overdue. Comic stores by their nature do not look like places that would welcome or tolerate women. If you don't want to re-inforce that impression, I think you have to find a concrete way to change it and I think a pamphlet specifically tailored to a non-comic fan female audience that is informative without being aggressive and which will pique their curiosity would be a large step in the right direction.

Here, especially, I think it would be important to sign the back of each pamphlet, because you are dealing with a potential customer whose first reaction is apt to range from bemusement to outright horror (Oh My God I Don't Look Like A Comic Book Fan, Do I?). It's a personal touch and that means a lot if you want to accomplish your goal.



CEREBUS
CAMPAIGN
'93

'what a great comic, what a prick, what a great comic, what a prick, etc.'

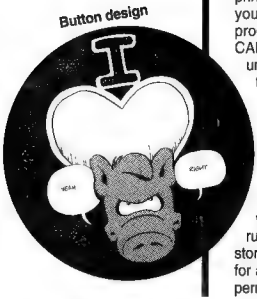


'You might want to pool your resources with other stores in your city or area'

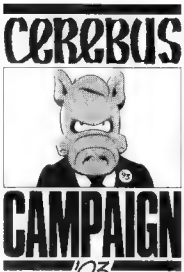
Merchandise is going to involve more of a judgement call on your part. As I mentioned in the introductory letter, I'll be providing you with two button designs and a t-shirt design. You can limit your participation to just producing enough of each for use by your staff. Or you can mass-produce them in whatever quantity. I would hope that you would incorporate your store logo into the t-shirt design so that both the logo and design are recognizable (some stores on the TOUR ran their store information so large in the co-op advertising plan that Larry Marder's ads couldn't be read with a magnifying glass). I think everyone would agree that a black t-shirt is going to sell better than a white one which will require printing the design in white ink (basically a reverse of what you see here, printing all the white parts in white ink rather than the black parts in black ink). The store logo can go at the top or at the bottom. Either the full address of the store or just the store logo and "(name of city) CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS." Or you might want to pool your resources with other stores in your city or area and put all of the logos and addresses on the back. Where the judgement call (or, more accurately, the balancing act) comes in is on pricing. You can set a price that is comparable to current market prices (about fifteen or sixteen dollars, I guess) and turn a pretty healthy profit, which can then be used to help finance other aspects of your store's CAMPAIGN '93. Or you can price the t-shirts at a dollar or two over cost, which would probably mean more of them would be out in circulation working as promotional tools, but less profit for your CAMPAIGN. Same thing with the buttons. The "I Love Cerebus" button is two colour (I mean, the heart *should* be red). If you price them at or near cost, you'll sell more, but have less of a profit. If you get them printed commercially, it's going to cost more than if you buy one of those badge-a-minute button makers and do them yourself (depending on the cost for your labour or that of an employee).

I should probably mention again what I said about Cerebus merchandise in last issue's letters page; if someone you know wants to produce Cerebus merchandise of any kind during 1993 and sell it in your store, by all means go for it. The same principle obtains; you can keep the price close to your cost and sell a lot, or raise the price and produce revenues that can go toward the CAMPAIGN. Yes, I'm well aware that there are unscrupulous individuals out there who are going to take advantage of this to produce over-priced merchandise and use the proceeds only to line their own pockets. It's the cost of doing business and having a wide-ranging and effective campaign in place. Thank you for your concern, but we make our money off of the monthly book and the reprint volumes; I figure the least I can do is let the stores have whatever merchandising revenues they can rustle up on their own (and it *is* only the individual stores; if someone wants to solicit the distributors for any merchandise they are going to need written permission from me).

Button design

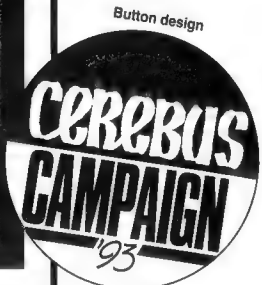


T-Shirt design



'I think everyone would agree that a black t-shirt is going to sell better than a white one'

Button design

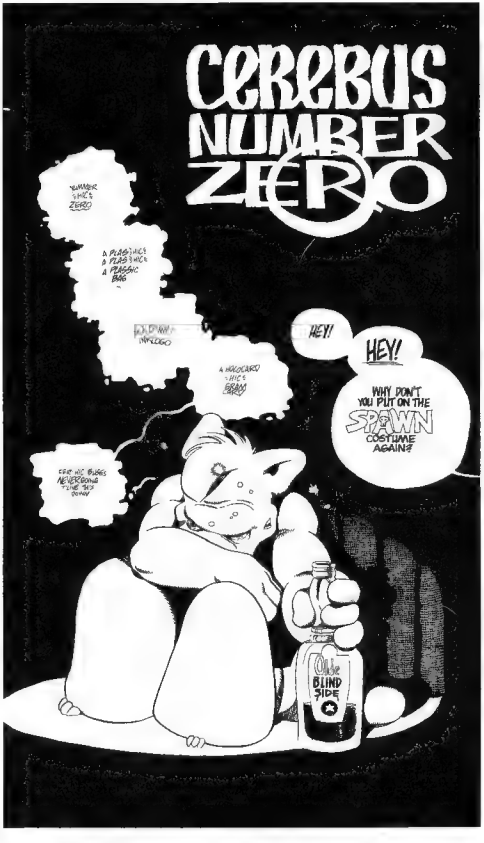


CEREBUS

CAMPAIGN '93

'Carol Denbow (*Star Clipper* in St. Louis) has suggested in-store displays featuring colour photocopy enlargements of Cerebus covers'

Oh, and here, just for laughs, is the original cover for the 'poly-bagged, gold logo, hologram card' CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO.



Okay, that's the basic 'bare bones' of CAMPAIGN '93.

If you are a store owner or manager and you'd like to be included on the mailing list for CAMPAIGN materials, please fax your name, the name of your store, mailing address, phone and/or fax number to me at (519) 576-0955. The core mailing list consists of the TOUR '92 sponsor stores as well as any store whose owner, manager or employee gave me a business card throughout the course of last year.

I wish I could do a personal appearance at every CAMPAIGN store, but it simply isn't practical. I am very open to any suggestions about the future course of the CAMPAIGN and I will be publishing the better ideas here in Cerebus as we go along. As an example, Carol Denbow (*Star Clipper* in St. Louis) has suggested in-store displays featuring colour photo-copy enlargements of Cerebus covers. In considering ideas for the CAMPAIGN, the key is to keep the costs down to amounts that any store can comfortably afford and which require some, but not a lot, of time and effort.

BB Sports Cards of Calgary Alberta has committed to ordering two thousand copies of the April issue of Cerebus and an equal number of Spawn 10's as part of a 2 for 1 promotion campaign. Naturally I don't expect every store to do this but it certainly was a large motivating factor in getting me to spend a week in Calgary and Edmonton in April (see personal appearances). This is a good example of the Direct Link in action; a store going that extra mile above and beyond the call, and a creator reciprocating by also going that extra mile (or thousand miles in the case of Alberta). We will be 'fronting' them a bunch of reprint volumes and have sent some autographed copies of *Cerebus Jam* #1, *A-V in 3D*, the animated portfolio, etc. to use as contest prizes leading up to the signing. We'll also be selling the April issue of Cerebus to them directly (never as a rule; but with this kind of commitment to CAMPAIGN '93, I have no qualms about selling direct on a one-time basis). For *Cerebus* 169, *BB Sports Cards* will be our third largest distributor.

I would also like to know if stores participating in CAMPAIGN '93; the Cerebus Direct Link stores; are interested in having their names and addresses published in Cerebus as stores that are willing to get involved in more Direct Link programs of this kind (i.e. Steve Bissette's *Tyrant*). Not as a way to get 'free stuff' but as a means of connecting with creators who want to work with you to promote their books; who will match your efforts with their own best efforts. Of course all of this would be strictly voluntary; while you would be on the mailing list you would be free to participate in or pass on any program that came across your desk.

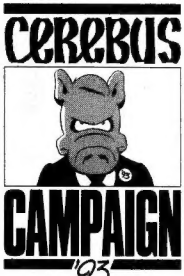
I'm also willing to do a certain amount of 'specialty artwork'; designs for in-store t-shirts and such that would be exclusive to your store. Again, this would be on the basis of reciprocal effort; I'm not going to fly down and paint your front window for you or do a group shot of ten Cerebus characters for your staff t-shirts, but I am very open to any ideas you might have. Let me know.

If you're a Cerebus fan and you know a store owner who might be interested in CAMPAIGN '93, I would appreciate it if you would show him (or her) your copy of Cerebus or photo-copy this section so he (or she) can look at it at their leisure. And if any of you have any ideas, I'd be happy to take a look at those as well.

Next time I hope to have a few preliminary details on radio and TV advertisements (which Tom Kintner has generously offered to supply to interested stores just at the cost of the videotape and which he will be producing at Atlantic Video in the Washington area).

Okay. I'm all done yammering at you. You know what has to be done.

Let's give 'em hell.



'I am very open to any suggestions about the future course of the CAMPAIGN'

CEREBUS

SUBSCRIPTIONS

CEREBUS MONTHLY 1 YEAR/12 ISSUES **$45.00**

20 PAGES OF STORY PLUS LETTERS PAGES AND OCCASIONAL BACK UP FEATURES. BLACK & WHITE WITH COLOUR COVER. PRICE INCLUDES POSTAGE. PLEASE INDICATE WITH WHICH ISSUE NUMBER YOU'D LIKE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO BEGIN. OUTSIDE CANADA & U.S. ADD $12.00 PER YEAR FOR EXTRA POSTAGE. IN CANADA ADD 7% GST.

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LET'S TWIST AGAIN

or 'The Fantagraphics Two-Step'

PANDERER!
HYPOCRITE!
TRAITOR!
WAP
WAP
WAP
WAP
I LOVE CRITICS SQUEEK
CRITICS DOLL
I LOVE CRITICS SQUEEK
TWEEDLEGARY
TWEEDLE-PENIS
TWEEDLEGARY
COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE US A QUOTE FOR YAHOO?
I'M SURE WITH YOUR CONSIDERABLE STATURE IN THE FIELD, IT WOULD (FAWN FAWN) REALLY HELP SALES
HAVE YOU FILLED OUT A 'SUMMER READING LIST'?
SAY! WHY DIDN'T YOU SEND THE ARTWORK WE REQUESTED FOR 'MISFIT LIT'?
WE WOULD'VE LOVED TO HAVE INCLUDED YOU...
OH! AND HEEERE'S YOUR 'HARVEY AWARD' NOMINATION BALLOT...

DAVE SIM PERSONAL APPEARANCES 1993 • **APRIL 14 CALGARY** Styx Warehouse **APRIL 14 CALGARY** Words and Pictures **APRIL 15 CALGARY** BB's SPORTS CARDS **APRIL 16 CALGARY** Another Dimension **APRIL 17, 18, 19 EDMONTON** Warp One (3 locations) **APRIL 19 EDMONTON** Diamond Warehouse **MAY 3, 4 MADISON** Capital City Trade Show **MAY 16–18** Heroes World Trade Show **JUNE 5–8 ATLANTA** Diamond Seminar **JUNE 11–13 CHARLOTTE, NC** Heroes Con. **JULY 2–4 CHICAGO** Comicon **AUGUST 19–22 SAN DIEGO** Comicon **NOVEMBER 13, 14 MANSFIELD, OHIO** Mid-Ohio Con. **TENTATIVE: UK COMIC ART CONVENTION '93** – I haven't heard from anyone there yet.

LARRY MARDER;
nexus of all comic book realities.

CEREBUS US TOUR '92

CHICAGO